

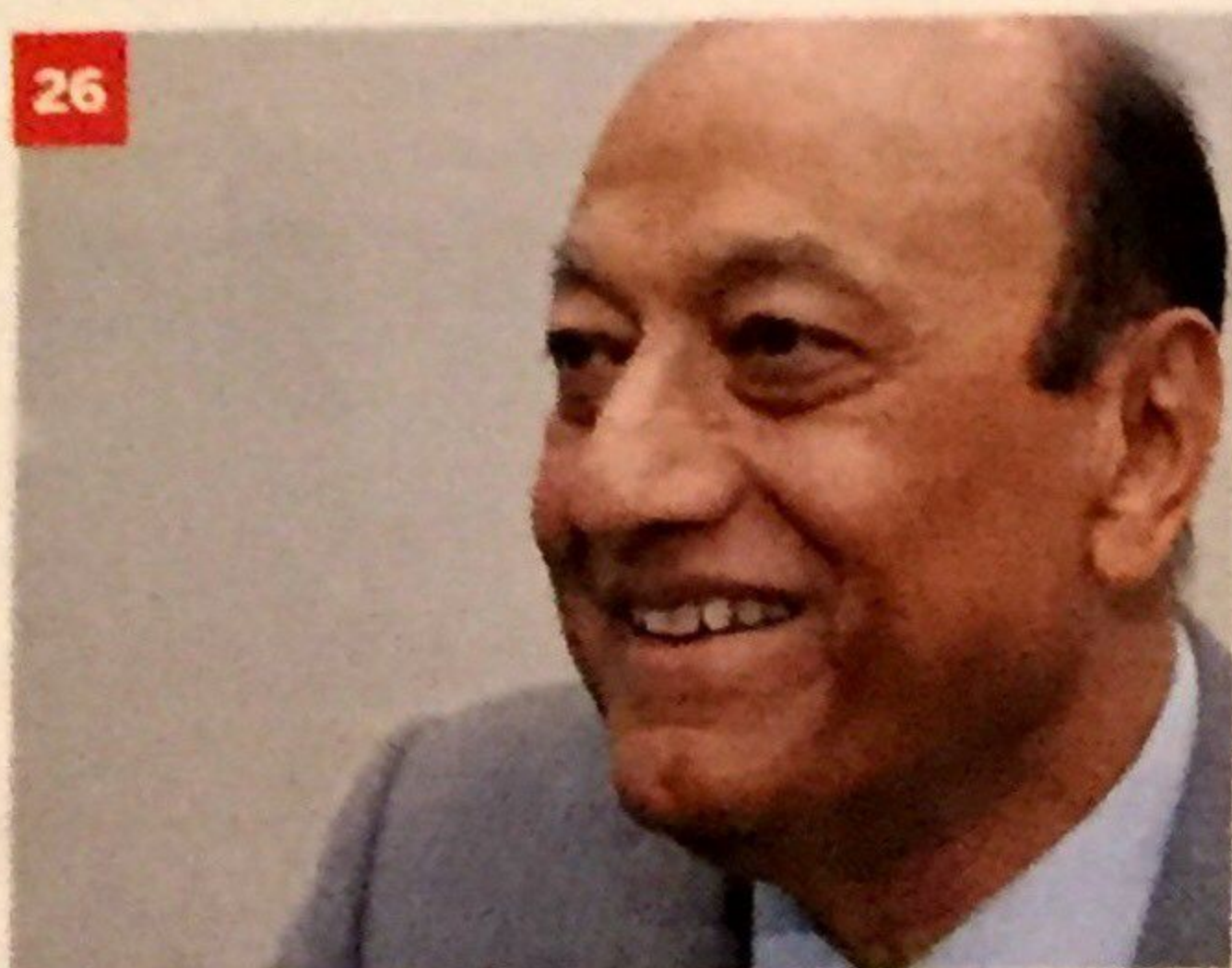
# bitcoin



20

## 26 RETAIL

**Paras Shahdarpuri**, the chairman of Nikai Group has created one of the largest electronics suppliers in the GCC. But he is not finished yet, with new markets and new sectors to conquer



26

## 32 HEALTH

The UAE's \$380m fitness market has seen its fair share of disruptions, including a wave of operators that saw traditional gyms face closure. We examine the threats and opportunities that lie ahead

## COVER STORY

### Banking on bitcoin

*Despite fears of a 'Bitcoin bubble', the cryptocurrency is gaining traction in the Gulf, where a handful of operators are promoting the low cost and relative security of virtual transactions*

By Sarah Townsend

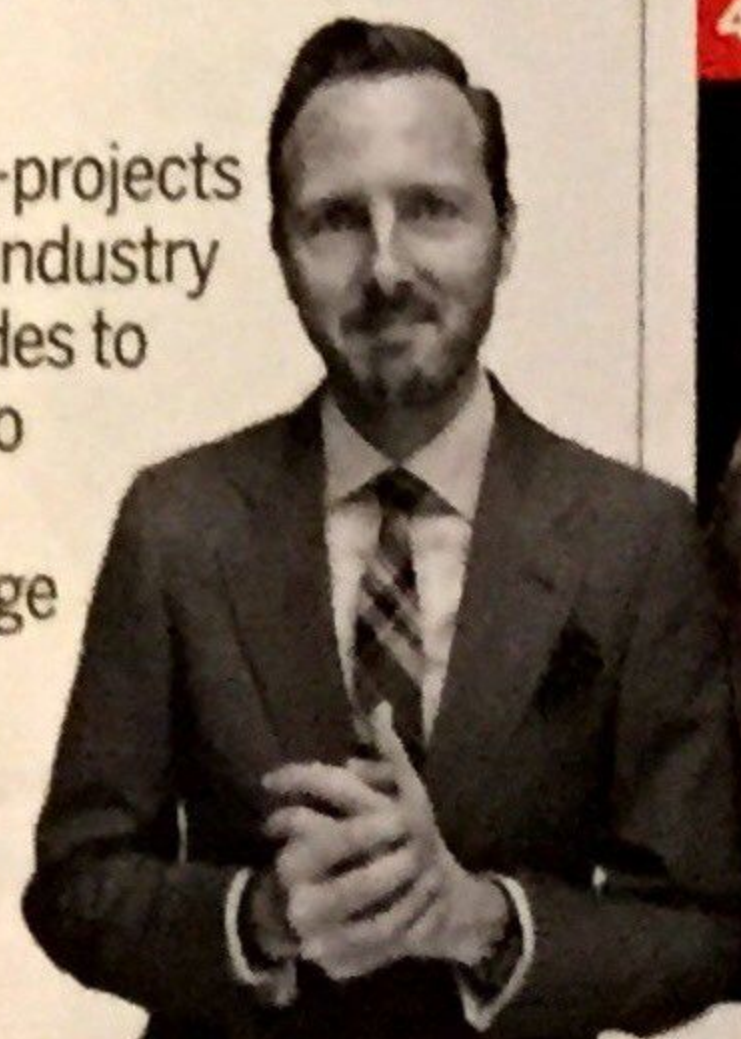
Photo: Getty Images, Shutterstock

## FIRST WORD

Investments in mega-projects that will define a city or industry sector's future for decades to come cannot be timed to coincide with economic cycles that last an average of six years"

**Jeremy Lawrence**

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## 38 AVIATION

Face scans, robot baggage handlers and shopping malls are set to revolutionise the travel sector. Asia-Pacific has been leading the way but faces fierce competition from the Middle East

## 42 TRANSPORT

Car culture in the UAE favours gas-guzzling super cars and powerful four by fours. But car companies such as Tesla and GM say there is a promising future for electric vehicles here



42